

1. Speaking Mindfully – Then and Now

Today those who are lucky can train mindful speech in Plum Village in France, a monastery led by Thit Nath Hanh, recently in Shwe Oo Min Monastery during (unexpected) visits of Sayadaw U Tejaniya in the meditation hall, or from Gregory Kramer, a student of Theravāda masters, in his meditation courses of Insight Dialogue. Gregory Kramer has developed a nice system of keeping one's mindfulness during speech, and I would like to compare it to the Pāli texts.

In Gregory Kramer's "Insight Dialog" there are six "guidelines" that should be considered when speaking. I found their names slightly vague and not enough clear, so I would like to propose other terms, which may be closer to the *Theravāda* understanding of the talking process.¹

	Original term	Proposed term
1.	Pause	Let go
2.	Relax	Enjoy
3.	Open	Watch
4.	Trust Emergence	Accept
5.	Speak the Truth	Share the Experience
6.	Listen Deeply	Guard the Ear Door

Rather than "pausing", which would mean to "start again later" the *Satipatṭhāna Sutta* suggests letting go: "*anissito ca viharati, na ca kiñci loke upādiyati*" – (he) stays independent, and he doesn't cling to anything in the world.

Perhaps the word "relax" would convey the meaning of "letting go", but here is meant noticing the tensions in the body and the turmoils in the mind. The sheer "letting go" however constrains the yogi into the present moment anyway, therefore in this stage what remains is rather to enjoy the presence. Here the "enjoying" corresponds with the joy (*pīti*) and pleasure (*sukha*) which are both essential for progress in *vipassanā* (as two of the seven factors of enlightenment, the *bojjhangas*).

In "open" Gregory Kramer means acceptance of whatever arises. A starting stage of "opening" has been achieved already with "let go" stage, and therefore we have now come to the advanced experience in the level of "open". When there is no more attachment in the mind, when the mind is in the present moment and doesn't suffer from disturbance – enjoys peace – then it is the best time to observe, to learn what happens. "Watch" means that the person is ready for anything that arises and thoroughly accepts its passing away. When hearing or a thought arise, the yogi notices them and as they cease he/she also

¹ The complete explanation of the Insight Dialogue instruction can be read for free in "The Meditation Instructions" (Gregory Kramer Meditating Together, Speaking From Silence: The practice of Insight Dialogue).

accepts them – because the cessation itself is taken on the same level as the occurrence – whatever happens that is observed and accepted with its features of arising and passing.

At this stage the absence of personal agenda is expected, and whatever arises, whether in terms of the person who we speak to or in the mind as ideas, is noticed, and awareness is opened to each other. Gregory Kramer emphasizes the necessity for natural process in the discussion, rather than any expectation or effort to get a point across or develop a plan. Instead of "Trust Emergence" which might be misunderstood as grasping for whatever arises in the mind, I suggest the word "accept", meaning one should accept whatever arises and passes as impermanent and be well aware of its suitability, importance, and intended way of expressing it. In this case the four aspects of clear comprehension (*sampajañña*) are of great importance:

1. Clear comprehension of the purpose,
2. Clear comprehension of suitability,
3. Clear comprehension of the present base of mindfulness (body/feelings/mental states/mental concomitants),
4. Clear comprehension of presence in the moment (awareness of one's continuity of awareness).²

To this it is good to know, that the Abhidhamma book *Vibhaṅga* mentions 98 kinds of greed (*lobha*), and six of them are related to greed in speech: "Asserting one's right, repeatedly asserting one's right, strongly asserting one's right, assertion of one's right, making an assertion of one's right, assertiveness of one's right" (*jappā pajappā abhijappā jappā jappanā jappitattam*).³ It may be worthwhile watching the arising and passing of thoughts influenced by such defilements.

At the next stage we speak – and here "truth" means "subjective truth, the truth of our experience." This is the time when we are dealing with the speech, aware of the meaning and possible consequences. Gregory Kramer is more giving emphasis on the meaning and the awareness of the meaning in the speech. The commentary to the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* adds that the yogi should be aware of the bodily process:

"Yo pana bhāsamāno "ayaṁ saddo nāma oṭṭhe ca paṭicca dante ca jivhañca tāluñca paṭicca cittassa tadanurūpam payogam paṭicca jāyati"ti sato sampajāno bhāsatī, ciram vā pana kālam sajjhāyam vā katvā dhammam vā kathetvā kammaṭṭhānam vā parivattetvā pañhaṇam vā vissajjetvā aparabhāge tuṇhībhūto iti paṭisañcikkhati "bhāsitakāle uppannā rūpārūpadhammā ettheva niruddhā"ti, ayaṁ bhāsite sampajānakāri nāma.

Yo tuṇhībhūto ciram dhammam vā kammaṭṭhānam vā manasikatvā aparabhāge iti paṭisañcikkhati "tuṇhībhūtakāle pavattā rūpārūpadhammā ettheva niruddhā, upādārūpapavattiyā sati bhāsatī nāma, asati tuṇhī bhavati nāmā"ti, ayaṁ tuṇhībhāve sampajānakāri nāmāti."

² *Sāttaka sampajañña, sappāya sampajañña, gocara sampajañña, asammoha sampajañña*, mentioned in the commentary to the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, e.g. *Majjhima Nikāya Aṭṭhakathā – 1. Mūlapariyāvaggo – 10. Satipaṭṭhānasuttavaṇṇanā - Catusampajaññapabbavaṇṇanā*.

³ "The Dhammasaṅgaṇī – Enumeration of the Ultimate Realities", U Kyaw Khine, Sri Satguru Publications, Delhi, 1999; vol.2 p.562. The Pāli original is in *Dhammasaṅgaṇipāli – 3. Nikkhepakaṇḍam - Hetugocchakam - par. 165*.

"He who whilst speaking thinks: "This sound arises dependent on the lips, teeth, tongue, palate, and the act of the mind that accords to that sound," speaks, mindful and clearly comprehending.

He who for a long time has studied [/recited] or expounded the Teaching or recited the words of the subject of meditation, or cleared a question, and later, on becoming silent, thinks: "The bodily and mental things which arose during the time of speaking ended just then," is called a doer of clear comprehension in speaking.

He who, after remaining silent long considering the Teaching or his subject of meditation, thinks that the bodily and mental things that existed in the time of silence ended just then, that the occurrence of derived material qualities is speech, and that the non-occurrence of these is silence, is called a doer of clear comprehension in keeping silence."⁴

Rather than "speak the truth" I suggest "share the experience" because this would encompass all of the mental and physical experience at that moment, not only the suitability of ideas expressed in the proper way, but also the presence of awareness in both the mind and the body, noticing the flux of phenomena that were captured by one's mindfulness.

"Listen deeply" sounds quite metaphorical to me, and it doesn't convey the unique Buddhist understanding of consciousness and *vipassanā* meditation. Inspired by the Pāli expressions, I would suggest "guard the ear door", because this is not only reflecting the Pāli words *samvara* (lit. "close entirely") or *rakkhati* (protect/guard) and *sotadvāra* ("ear-door") used commonly for the awareness of one's six consciousnesses, but it also reminds us of the āyatana chapter of *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, where the Buddha suggests the yogi knows the ear, the sound, their contact, and the fetters (defilements) that arise or not arise as the consequence. By awareness at the ear door it is possible to understand the fallacy of hearing, in the sense that ear makes the sound, not "I" or the person who speaks. What we hear entirely depends on how the ear interprets it, which is unfortunately commonly different than what was intended by the source of the sound. The ear is the sense-base of hearing, and it is not right to rely on it, because it may malfunction or suffer destruction. Even if the ear interprets the sounds to the brain in a form acceptable by the source, the brain may connect the sounds to different perceptions or memories and thus cause misunderstanding anyway. Being well aware at the ear-base might cause not only deep sense of tolerance and patience regarding the received sounds, but it may ultimately lead to Enlightenment through sharpening mindfulness to such a level that arising and passing of each consciousness is recognized and the idea of "self" is thereafter utterly abolished.

2. Believe It or Not: Webu Sayadaw

Below I am sharing with you my translation of Ma Htay Htay Lwin's notes from recordings of various monks who speak about Webu Sayadaw. These recordings were provided to Shwe Lan Galay project by Snow Aye, one of its most important contributors.

Why were the babies in the past tied up a bundle of neem-tree (leaves) around their neck? At the age of one year or two years, the flesh of the baby is very sweet, and ogres may eat it. Therefore, the babies were tied up a bungle of neem-tree (leaves) around their neck, and because the neem-tree has bitter taste, the flesh will become also bitter. There was an experience with the great master Webu Sayadaw, that this way the ogres won't be able to eat (the flesh). Regarding the other information, just

⁴ "The Way of Mindfulness", ven. Soma Thera, [edited version], Kandy, 2010 (Translation of Commentary and Sub-Commentary on *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* (<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/lib/authors/soma/wayof.html>) .

about a few years before the Webu Sayadaw dropped his aggregates (i.e. passed away), when (he) went to a hospital for medical checkup and his eyes were examined, the doctor (said that) one eye cannot ("don't") see any more. A monk (however) objected that both eyes (of Webu Sayadaw) (can) see.⁵ And when asked why, he said that not long ago the sayadaw taught (the monk) the Discourse on Turning the Wheel of Dhamma (*Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*). They forgot the great (psychic) power of the (Webu) Sayadaw. In fact, one of the Sayadaw's eyes could not see any more. There (was) a belief that when the Sayadaw touches a fountain (pen), he (the sayadaw) passes the (/whatever) exam. There were (cases) when the sayadaw entered the Dhamma Hall of Inn Lay and was examined – there were unnoticeably erected thorns of rose, so that when the sayadaw is coming his face-expression will be disturbed ("broken"), (so) there were cases of (such) examining. When the Sayadaw was (still) alive, sayadaw's shoes were inserted and sown inside pillow(s) and (the devotees) slept (on those pillows). The sayadaw's hair was inserted in bottles and worshipped. After a long time the hair formed a circle similar to the Wheel of Dhamma, which (I) [perhaps only Snow knows who narrated this] myself have respectfully visited and seen. Another thing, it should be mentioned ("known") that parts of female's body should not be touched by monks. Then why did (they) spread (their) hair on the path where the sayadaw was walking and payed respect? How should I explain that? The Buddha's monks, if they get hold of a female-devotee, (they) fall into an offence. It is contained in the rules (/ *Vinaya*) that if the female-devotes "happen to" touch (or) get hold (of a monk), there is no falling into an offence (for the monk) - however, it is not suitable. Then, when (the hair) was in a flash dropped and spread on the path where the master sayadaw was walking, the sayadaw, of course, happened to step on it. It is (however) not that the sayadaw would make announcement and (thus) ordered (the hair) to be spread. In fact, if the sayadaw did order (the hair) to be spread, (the sayadaw) would fall into an offence.⁶

Q: Then, the cave where the great Sayadaw meditated was a human-made cave or naturally arisen cave?

Answer of the sayadaw: The cave where the great master sayadaw practiced meditation is a naturally-arisen cave. Now in the later times, because people reconstruct (it), it has expanded.

Q: Venerable sir, were the sayadaws that stayed (here) before the Webu Sayadaw people who practiced meditation?

Aos: Anyway, when the monks headed toward extinction (in this monas⁷tery?) (I) don't know a single name of a sayadaw. Long ago, however, when the great Sayadaw was (alive), there was the Wayonbin Monastery (ဝါရံပုဂ္ဂကျောင်း).

Q: Then, venerable sir, where there any things in the Webu Monastery that are difficult to explain?⁸

⁵ Here I am dealing with true spoken Burmese, and the brackets assure that there is a lot of words to "add" in order to understand.

⁶ The offence here would be very serious, namely *sarighādisesa*. Ordering a woman to touch a monk or arrange physical contact is classified by the *Pārājika Pāli – Sarighādisesa no.2* as same as if the monk himself touched the woman.

⁷ It seems sayadaw is unable to answer to this question, apparently because he doesn't know the answer.

⁸ i.e. where there any mysteries

Aos: According to the history of the Pagoda of Nanhar Hill [နှုတ္တကြောင်စွေတိ, lit. Sandalwood Hill Pagoda], when Ko Shwe Hla decided (he) will stab a baby from Ma Poe U's belly (she was pregnant at that time, perhaps dead) by knife and (thus) kill (it) on the hill (i.e. Nanhar Hill), because the baby (there) smelled like sandalwood, (they) built a pagoda (on the hill),⁹ according to the history (records), (and) that is a pagoda which was (there) before the master sayadaw was (there). In the time when the Bagan was in (its) successful period, there were built many pagodas. Among those pagodas, in the Pagoda of Nanhar Hill there stayed the treasure-keepers [ဥစ္စဘဏ္ဍာဉ်, one of the four kinds of deities of the *Catummahārājika* heaven] in the western side (of the pagoda). If (one) was chanting, (he/she) would have to chant in the eastern side (of the pagoda). During the time of the great Sayadaw some (people) happened to keep a finger-ring of a treasure-keeper (that lived there) upon which (the treasure-keeper) came and asked (for the finger-ring). At that time the person who brought (the finger-ring) had to return (the finger-ring) back in the original place (i.e. back at the Nanhar Hill Pagoda). Now a female-supporter went and "kept" flowers at the Nanhar Hill. She put the little finger-ring on (her) thigh. Then, thinking "I will wear (the finger-ring) again," (the finger-ring) was not there anymore [i.e. it disappeared from her thigh]. Then (the female-supporter), after (she) offered meal for the pagoda, (she) turned the water (offered to the pagoda) toward the place where they (i.e. the treasure-keepers) stay, and as (she) was relinquishing (the water) (she) had to say and request "give back the little ring" (လက်ဝပ်လေးပြန်ပေးပါ). A month later, (the treasure-keepers) dropped the ring on the bare ground where (she) was coming, (and thus) returned (it).¹⁰ Sometimes there are experienced teasing ("little games") (like this) among the people and treasure-keepers. (Indeed.)

Before, indeed, there were *pariyatti* students on the hill. Later there were (no) monks who would teach (*pariyatti*) and no students (as well). There are (on the hill?) in number over around 40 precept-nuns (/sayalays). Regarding meditation, there is not just one kind, namely *ānāpāna*, there are in addition (various) changes (in meditation) when it is appropriate.¹¹

When the Webu Sayadaw went up to and paid respect to the relics of the Shwe Thar Lyaung Hills (ရွှေသာဇူးတောင်ကြံ့), the devotee that was fulfilling his religious duties [I think here is meant massaging the sayadaw], sometimes felt the sayadaw's body as becoming hard and soft, meaning that (he) experienced the sayadaw's (psychic) power at that time. (I) have heard that it was possible to see the show of (psychic) power (of the sayadaw) if (one) went up to the hill-range and waited (there), especially on the full-moon day of Tazaung-Mone month. Have you also ("Do you still") met such male and female devotees (who saw it)?

⁹ Ma Poe U, me and Ma Hsu Yee Mon believe, already passed away, but at that time she was pregnant. U Shwe Hla cut off the baby from her stomach (when Ma Po U was dead already). The baby, unlike other babies who smell bad when removed from the stomach, was fragrant, smelling nice. (The text doesn't explain whether the child was actually killed or whether it was alive and kept, or whether it was already dead when removed from the stomach; it is not sure whether the child was deposited in the pagoda, or whether the child was taken alive and pagoda was built to remember the occasion.)

¹⁰ i.e. the lady-supporter was coming to pay respects to the Nanhar Hill Pagoda again, and the treasure-keepers somehow knew where the lady is coming. They then kept the ring on the bare ground so that the lady can see it and take it.

¹¹ i.e. when the meditation teacher feels that the student would be more successful in a different meditation object or style, the teacher will change the instruction to the suitable method.

A: I (haven't) met (anybody/anything) of that kind. However, there is a grandma-nun (/elderly precept nun) who is of age over 90 (years old) in (this) monastery. When the grandma (nun) was little (in age), she would be in a dream while the sayadaw powerfully shone in *jhāna*.¹² (She) saw (/“met”) how the sayadaw entered into the *jhāna* (for example, like when one is walking (while) carrying oil lamp (i.e. a lamp used long ago, carried by handle keeping the lamp below the handle) and went along the slope of the hill [where was the monastery]. At that time, when the grandma [but at this time she was young!] exclaimed "(I) have respectfully met, (I) have respectfully met!", the light vanished. When the grandma woke up, she asked others whether they (also) respectfully met (the sayadaw, in their dream). (But) when (they said) they didn't see (the sayadaw), the grandma [at the time when she was still young] said "(I) have lost my human life" "it's all gone", thrashed around (/tossed her body here and there) and cried.¹³ At that time the sayadaw next time again showed (her) (his) great (psychic) power. Another thing is that the people who had a high position [as officers etc.] in the Webu Hill (area) and were rich, (they) travelled (to the hill) a lot, (also) because it was a short trip (/“because the trip was near”). In fact, saying "in Yangon there is Shwedagon, in Mandalay there is Maha Mya Muni, (and) in Kyaukse there is Webu Hill" was the attitude (/“understanding”) by which they respectfully visited (the Webu Hill) a lot. Later, saying "it's entangled in politics" they then go/went only to the Shwe Thar Lyaung Hill. Coming to Webu Hill decreased, and the foreigners (started) to arrive. Later thanks to the Sayagyi Goenka they (the foreigners) come. Sayagyi Goenka gave Dhamma discourses of great Webu Sayadaw again (/by himself) in so easy words that everybody (could) understand, (and) therefore many people appreciate (Webu Sayadaw's Dhamma discourses). Sayagyi Goenka teaches meditation in more than 150 meditation centers throughout the world, in more than as many as 80 languages. Now the World Vipassana Pagoda in India is just one foot smaller than the great Shwedagon Pagoda, having 364 feet (in height). It is finished (by being) build with stone so that around as much as 8000 yogis can meditate at its base (/“in the down-side”). A great merchant donated a half of a little island at the border of Bombay City and (there) the great meditation center was built.

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Q: Then, venerable sir, where there any things in the Webu Monastery that are difficult to explain?¹⁵

¹² i.e. Webu Sayadaw was in meditation and through the powerful concentration of *jhāna* sayadaw radiated a powerful shine of light. The light was so strong that it even penetrated in the grandma's dream. I believe that the light pervaded whole the area, and thus it entered the place where the grandma was sleeping even though she didn't sleep in the same chamber where the sayadaw attained the *jhāna*.

¹³ i.e. she thought she had gone mad.

¹⁴ It seems sayadaw is unable to answer to this question, apparently because he doesn't know the answer.

¹⁵ i.e. where there any mysteries

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Before, indeed, there were *paryatti* students on the hill. Later there were (no) monks who would teach (*paryatti*) and no students (as well). There are (on the hill?) in number over around 40 precept-nuns (/sayalays). Regarding meditation, there is not just one kind, namely *ānāpāna*, there are in addition (various) changes (in meditation) when it is appropriate.¹⁸

The great master sayadaw ate from (his) alms-bowl. (He) went for alms-round every day. The great master sayadaw also practiced the cemetary *dhutaṅga*.¹⁹ The great master sayadaw never accepted ("held") (by his hand) of money offered by lay-men and lay-women. Because (the sayadaw) didn't want to accept ("hold") money by (his) hand, (the lay people) offered the money (to the sayadaw) at a corner, after (the lay people?) swept (the monastery?) with broom. It is said that Webu Sayadaw was (there)

¹⁶ Ma Poe U, me and Ma Hsu Yee Mon believe, already passed away, but at that time she was pregnant. U Shwe Hla cut off the baby from her stomach (when Ma Po U was dead already). The baby, unlike other babies who smell bad when removed from the stomach, was fragrant, smelling nice. (The text doesn't explain whether the child was actually killed or whether it was alive and kept, or whether it was already dead when removed from the stomach; it is not sure whether the child was deposited in the pagoda, or whether the child was taken alive and pagoda was built to remember the occasion.)

¹⁷ i.e. the lady-supporter was coming to pay respects to the Nantha Hill Pagoda again, and the treasure-keepers somehow knew where the lady is coming. They then kept the ring on the bare ground so that the lady can see it and take it.

¹⁸ i.e. when the meditation teacher feels that the student would be more successful in a different meditation object or style, the teacher will change the instruction to the suitable method.

¹⁹ i.e. Webu Sayadaw for a certain period of time made determination to stay in cemetary and watch decaying corpses. Observing the nature of one's own body with reference to nine stages of a decaying corpse is one of the meditation practices suggested by the Buddha in *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*.

alone. Later the great master sayadaw always admonished: "don't go and make (/''take'') demerit because of others, unnecessarily."²⁰

(Some people) say that Bo Min Gaung, Shin Ma Hti, and others revered the great Sayadaw. Also, people "could not live" without going to the places of Ingyinbin and Webu Sayadaw. In fact, (people) seriously came and were meditating (in the place of Webu Sayadaw).

The sayadaws who were successful in their (practice of making) the philosopher's stone (ဓာတ်လုံး), becoming thus the "accomplished sayadaws" [i.e. accomplished in psychic powers] of unrotting corpse (after they die), have to be cut in pieces and cremated if the (community's) desire is to cremate them. It is good to explain the case of being an Arahant, if (you want to know what happens) when an Arahant is close to passing away. When a flower of a sal tree (ingyin, အင်ကြင်း) blooms, (and) the great master sayadaw will abandon the burden of aggregates (i.e. pass away), (a?) bone of the great master sayadaw will be inserted in the great Tiloka Sabbaññu Pagoda (တိလောကသွေ့ဘေးတိဝင်္ကား), (this) was said by the Kyet-Min Bodaw.²¹ However, because the people didn't believe, the pagoda-umbrella (*hti*) was placed (on the top of the Tiloka Sabbaññu Pagoda) two times – but both times it collapsed.²² Finally, just after the great Sayadaw passed away, it was possible to place the pagoda-umbrella (*hti*) (successfully, without it collapsing). Extraordinarily, all (the people) have respectfully witnessed (/''encountered'') and seen how the great master sayadaw made offering of fire by *jhāna*²³ to (pagodas ranging) from Taung Nantha²⁴, Sambuddhe, Sakyamuni, until Shwe Thar Lyaung.²⁵ There is a custom of making a procession around (this area) with the relics of the great master sayadaw every *uposatha* day.

3. Arousing Religious Zeal (Poem by Ledi Sayadaw)

This poem is the transcription of Ledi Sayadaw's poem in Burmese done by Ma Htay Htay Lwin, from the recording of Snow Aye. The translation is mine. (I have made little corrections to the Burmese translation in accordance with a portion published in the Internet.)

လယ်တီဆရာတော် သံဇေဂတော်ထပ်ကဗျာ	Ledi Sayadaw's <i>tay-hlut</i> (song-like) poem to arouse religious zeal
ပစ္စည်းရှာအလုပ်နဲ့ နေ့ပုတ်လို့ရက်ဟုနဲ့	By working - seeking wealth – the days run fast by punching each day.
နှစ်မောက်လို့ အသက်ကုန်တယ်၊ သတ်ပုံဖြတ်မကောင်း၊	Regretful, (one's) life ends, with wrong understanding.

²⁰ i.e. the people make demerit because of another person (i.e. the Webu Sayadaw), by forcefully trying to persuade the sayadaw to break *Vinaya* rules.

²¹ From the name – bo-daw – I assume he was a fortune-teller or a weikza.

²² i.e. of course they wanted to put it on the pagoda only one time. Then it collapsed, so they put it for the second time. It collapsed again.

²³ We can argue whether here "*jhāna*" is directly connected to the "fire", thus saying that the fire was made by *jhāna*, or (referring to the most famous usage of the word *jhāna* in Burmese language – *zhan pyande* – levitates by *jhāna*) that the sayadaw was levitating by his psychic powers and as he was levitating he made offerings of fire to those pagodas (not however mentioning whether the fire was coming out of oil-lamps that he took with him or whether it was made also by psychic power).

²⁴ Mentioned above in different narrative as "Nanthal Hill Pagoda"; "Taung" means "Hill".

²⁵ The sentence doesn't make much sense if we think it is related to the moment of the sayadaw's passing away. It makes sense only if we understand it as related to a number of different occasions during the sayadaw's life.

အခုလိန့် သံသာဖွေမှာ၊ ခန္ဓာတွေများတဲ့ စတောင်း၊	And now in the midst of rebirth-cycle, the basket amounting in aggregates,
အသက်မွေးမှစခန်းပါ၊ ဝမ်းပူဆာလှကြောင်း၊	an extra retreat from the living-making, a reason for great worry for (one's) belly;
လေးဆယ်ကျော်အချုပ်နောင်းခါမှ၊ သူကြော်လောင်းလုပ်ချင်း၊	when (one's) age get's late, crossing forty, (one) wants to play a richman-to-be,
ပိုးကုန်ပြုတွန်မချုပ်နင့်၊ ရွှေစရာမှားဖို့ဖြစ်စင်၊ နွားဒိုကြီး အမော့ဆင်သလို၊	then don't drop the plough at the end of rains, afraid of being the wrong time, dressing the cow as if for a great toil.
မဇလျော့လျှင် ဘဝဆုံးရှာဝိမျှ၊	(But) if (you) don't reduce, the life will end hard.
အသာတုန်း နေ့အစဉ်လွှဲဖို့သာပြင်၊ တရားသို့မတက်ဖွေယူလျှင်၊ အခက်တွင်တွင် ကြံတွေ့ဖို့လေး။	Until pleased, rather than redirecting every day, not developing in Dhamma, (one) just encounters increasing difficulties.
ငါးအရုံအင်အာရုံ ခင်မှုနှင့်နေ့ကုန်၊ နင်ယခုမေ့ပုံလို တွေ့မကြံစမ်း၊	(By) the power of the group of five objects /i.e. visible, auditory, olfactory, taste, and tactile objects/ and living whole day with love, (there is) the retreat where (you) won't experience the way you forget now.
ပယ်လေးတ သောကသံမှာ၊ မျှောရရံရှိတော့ကမန်း၊	Then what's left is just to be turned afloat (towards) the four entrances of the worlds of woe, in the plane of grief.
အောက်အပိုမိုသောင်အင့်မှာ၊ ခေါင်းမပြုစတမ်း၊	At the cape of the Gapless-Hell's sandbank, just don't poke out (your) head.
နှစ်အရည် နစ်မည့်လမ်းကိုလ၊ နင်မျှော်စမ်းနင့်ကို၊	Oh, following the path of drowning for long years, you drowned yourself.
အသနာထင်အလင်းရဟန်း နင့်အဖျင်းပိုထက်သာပို၊	(Despite) the bright light of Teaching, your laziness was just increasing.
ဒီလောဘစရိက်အိုကို၊ မလိုက်လိုရောင်ပစ်လို့၊	Don't follow, shun the old habit of greed indeed.
နောင်အသစ်တကယ်ပြိုင်လျှင်၊ ကောင်းဖို့အစဉ်၊ ခွင့်သာရိုက်မှ မလိုက်ချင်လျှင်၊ အမိုက်နင့်အပြင် ရှိသေးလေလိမ့်လား၊	Later, if (you) really change into new, and don't want to follow the good way just when opportune, shall you still escape the darkness?
အခွင့်သာတုန်းမှ မရှိန်းချင်လျှင် အရှုံးနင့်အပြင်ရှိသေးလေလိမ့်လား၊	If (you) don't want to struggle only when opportune, will you still escape loss?
အခွင့်သာဆဲမှမခဲခြင်လျှင် အလွှဲနင့်အပြင်ရှိသေးလေလိမ့်လား၊	If you don't want to work hard, still when it is possible, will you escape what is wrong?
အခွင့်သာဆဲ နင်မခဲ အလွှဲနင့်အပြင်မရှိပါ၊	There is no way to escape going wrong if you don't toil (/strive) when there is still the opportunity.
အခွင့်သာတုန်း နင်မရှိန်းအရှုံးနင့်အပြင်မရှိပါ၊	When it is still possible, if you don't struggle, you won't avoid loss.
အခွင့်သာရိုက်နင်မလိုက် အမိုက်နင့်အပြင်မရှိပါ။	When it is still possible, if you don't follow, you won't get out of darkness.

4. Ayta Kraita

Nan-daw-gya (နန်းဝေါ်ကျော်) is the banded krait, a famous snake in South-East Asia. It was spotted two times in Shwe Oo Min Monastery in recent time, and I just walked a few meters far from it – although I didn't know that. I was later informed about the snake by the monastery's young helper Ko Yay. Although I don't have a photo of it biting me or showing its tongue in its wrath, I learned the traditional belief related to it.

Banded krait, in the Burmese understanding, is the "king of snakes". Sometimes they also call him "the teacher of snakes". It is in fact a seriously venomous snake. From Wikipedia we learn: "The major clinical effects caused by the venom of this species include vomiting, abdominal pain, diarrhoea, and dizziness. Severe envenomation can lead to respiratory failure and death may occur due to suffocation." (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Banded_krait). It slithers slowly, and it doesn't get easily irritated. In fact, it doesn't even bother to run away when it sees a man (unlike for example cobra). The most feared feature of this snake is the expectation of a multitude of poisonous snake around it. They are his "body-guards". Cobras, vipers, water-snakes, and other are expected to be somewhere near the banded krait, bringing it food and protecting it.

Indraneil Das doesn't mention any such social achievement of banded krait in his book "*Snakes of South-East Asia*", on page 89. However, we can learn from there that its diet comprises of "snake, lizards, frogs, fish and reptile eggs." The snake has "black bands approximately equal in size to pale interspaces; forehead has a pale V-shaped marking; belly is pale yellow or brown, with bands; iris is black." Or as Ko Yay says, "*war tayit, amay tayit*" – "one yellow ring (followed) by a black ring" – meaning that this snake is recognizable by its obvious black and yellow ring alternating one after another.

May all beings be happy,

monk Sarana